

INFORMATION PAPER

DAIM-ISS
12 March 2014

SUBJECT: Victim Advocacy Program

1. PURPOSE: To provide an overview of the Army's Family Advocacy Victim Advocacy Program

2. FACTS:

a. In 2003, the Defense Task Force on Domestic Violence recommended that the Military Services establishes a coordinated Victim Advocacy (VA) Program.

b. On 12 September 2004, the Army institutionalized the VA Program. The Program is managed by the Family Advocacy Program Manager within the Army Community Service Center. The primary function of a VA is to provide non-clinical advocacy services and support to victims of domestic violence. VAs may provide services to victims of sexual assault when requested by either the victim or the command; on a case-by-case basis.

c. VAs must possess a bachelor's degree in Social Work, Psychology or in a related field of study. As a prerequisite of employment, they must also possess two years experience in working with domestic abuse and sexual assault victims. Though not required, many VAs possess certification through the National Organization of Victim Assistance (NOVA).

d. In addition to having a professional degree, VAs receive 80 hours of Family Advocacy Staff Training (FAST) through the Army Medical Center and School. They also receive continuing education training on the role of the victim advocate, Non clinical Lethality Assessment, Restricted Reporting Policy, and Transitional Compensation for Abuse Dependents.

e. The VA responsibilities include 24/7 crisis intervention, assistance with filing restricted and unrestricted reports, safety planning, emotional support, information, referral, and assistance with accessing medical, legal, mental health, and chaplaincy services.

f. There are currently 172 FAP Victim Advocates in the Army; 85 Department of the Army civilians and 87 contractors. VAs are strategically assigned to 56 large and medium sized installations. Family Advocacy Program Managers provide advocacy services at small installations or where the Soldier population is less than 5,000.

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